



Delaware Early Childhood Council

FINAL - November 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes

Colwyck Center – Resource Room
12 Landers Lane
New Castle, DE 19720

The mission of the DECC is to promote the development of a comprehensive and coordinated early childhood system, birth to eight, which provides the highest quality services and environment for Delaware's children and their families.

Welcome/Call to Order/Approve Minutes

Madeleine Bayard called the meeting to order at 9:05am and welcomed everyone. Dawn Alexander noted today was their Thanksgiving celebration in the Multipurpose Room here in the Colwyck Center (Colonial School District). Dawn also mentioned programs that serve children with disabilities, including the Parents As Teachers playgroup, which are continuing to grow.

Madeleine called everyone's attention to the 2019 Meeting Schedule that was in the meeting packet. The meeting minutes of the September 20, 2018 meeting were approved by Heidi Beck and seconded by Julie Johnson and passed unanimously with no changes.

Jon Sheehan, Education Policy Advisor for Governor John Carney was in attendance and spoke about the recently submitted Preschool Development Grant and thanked pertinent staff who worked on it (Dr. Kim Krzanowski, Caitlin Gleason and a lead team). He also mentioned that the First Lady has been active in promoting kindergarten registration at Colonial, and that she is excited to continue this work in the coming months. Another announcement was that the Governor signed Executive Order 24 making Delaware a trauma-informed state. This order makes various agency staff trained in trauma-informed practices, recognition programs for champions of this program, and creates a trauma-informed tool kit to help children/families who have experienced trauma. A total of \$9 million is being invested to allow agencies like DOE and school districts to bolster this work. He noted that it is a little early to give an overview of the Governor's budget presentation, but that DOE will have its budget hearing on November 20. This is where they lay out their spending request. DEFAC meets on December 19 so we will have better budget projections at that time. In mid-January, Governor Carney will give his State of the State address, and the following week his recommended budget will be released. So perhaps at the next DECC meeting (January 30) there can be further discussion about the Governor's recommended budget. Jon noted he met with Dawn Alexander and Dusty Blakey regarding early childhood governance and the challenges that are created by having services spread among several state agencies. He assured the group that they have heard our feedback on this and, while he did not have specifics, noted the Governor's Office is working on the governance issue.

Molly Magarik spoke about DHSS/Purchase of Care (POC) rates. She noted they had their budget hearing yesterday. They are focusing on core services, and POC is considered a core service. She noted

the epilogue language that requires a rate increase in April or sooner. There is still some uncertainty around what the program would cost (due to other federal and CCDF requirements being implemented). DHSS needs to do system upgrades, which will also impact market rate increase timing. Enrollment was down for summer 2018, so we wanted to make sure that that was not just a trend, but rather a true indicator. There are a lot of moving pieces when determining market rates. She further noted that early learning providers/business owners need the market rate information in order to project and conduct your business. She committed to having DHSS continue to look at this as a priority, and noted it is still early in the fiscal year budgeting process.

Rep. Quinn Johnson introduced himself as a legislator and business owner. He noted that the 2020 budget would start in July 2019. As the Governor's Office is preparing its numbers, legislators work with those projection numbers. He indicated that revenue pictures do change as the budget is developed. He anticipates an increase in funding due to economic, tax changes, etc. Most importantly, Rep. Johnson believes the market rates are at a crisis stage so he is pushing for change. There are several issues – no consistency among providers, increasing costs for businesses and needed advocacy. He noted there are new members in the legislature this year and encouraged folks to meet with new House and Senate members about early learning issues.

At this point, Madeleine noted we would send out DEAEYC Advocacy page for meeting with legislators.

Next, members (listed on agenda) of the Wilmington Early Care and Education Council (WECEC) gave an overview of their staff, mission, partnerships and available resources. Their update focused on the City of Wilmington's Professional Development Resource Center 2018 Fiscal Year Data Report. Heidi Beck touched on the great work that is being done with Kindergarten Registration and Readiness and how they have partnered with Colonial School District.

Other items they are working on include expanding an MOU with LAUNCH, developing MOUs with other organizations, working on strategic planning process, working on grant application for \$10,000 to support strategic plan and data collection, working on general funding to continue their work, and continuing to provide scholarships to those seeking TECE 1 and 2.

Paulina Gyan of Division of Public Health provided information on the ECCS Impact Grant (which they coordinate with WECEC) regarding developmental screening for 3-5 year olds. They have a great partnership with Delaware Readiness Teams. They recently did a survey of developmental screening in child care centers. They found that family owned centers and non-Star rated centers lacked access to ASQ kits to use for training. As a result, ECCS put funds together and purchased 15 ASQ kits for use by centers. They are currently at the WECEC Resource Center. She noted that people do have to be trained to use the kits. Someone asked if they could see a sample of the kit so they would know what is in it. Paulina noted that she did not have one with her, but that the kits can be borrowed from the Resource Center and that individuals need to be trained to use the kit.

Julie Johnson gave a brief update on the Child Care Aware of America's Military Child Care initiative and Drill Weekend, described in the handout in the packet. Key points of the update included keeping military child care in the forefront, continually supporting military families, and appreciation for the Council supporting this initiative.

Diane Frentzel gave an update on the Kindergarten Registration Campaign, which included feedback received from parents as they have worked within districts on their registration processes. She noted the kickoff event was held October 18 to highlight the importance of early kindergarten registration. She noted that Secretary Susan Bunting and First Lady Tracey Quillen have been important in pushing

forward the campaign. Next, Caitlin Gleason read a proclamation from the Governor declaring November as Kindergarten Registration month. Diane also reviewed the Kindergarten Registration Month calendar that was included in the packet and noted other available resources (packets, forms, school choice information, literacy programs, library cards).

It was noted that Patches Hill of the Department of Education's Technology Section was unable to attend our meeting to speak about Data Systems Integration: What's Underway and Future Plans. He will attend an upcoming meeting to give the presentation.

Dr. Kim Krzanowski gave a staffing update on the Office of Early Learning. She noted that Debra Taylor is the new Head Start Collaboration Director, and that Christina Koutsourades is the new Early Learning Transition's lead. She noted that the office has one vacancy, which is Carmen Gallagher's position, which will focus on PATs, Delaware First and some other programs. This position should be posted on the DOE website next week for two weeks.

Also referenced in the packet was the Community Conversations Report for 2018. Kim noted that DHSS, DSCYF De Stars and OCCL worked together to hear feedback from public in order to learn how we can improve early learning in Delaware. One key take away from the feedback is that the governance structure is a challenge for most attendees. She noted we will continue to work on this.

OEL staff recently organized an ECE Teacher Compensation meeting. They heard from national experts regarding other state's pre-kindergarten programs, educator support, and concurred that compensation parity is still a national issue. We continue to think outside the box to move the needle on this as this is at a crisis point. It was noted that additional information on this initiative will be sent to members with the meeting minutes.

Kim announced the recommendations of the CCDF Quality Spending Working Group, which was formed after the Council discussed one time additional funds via DHSS/CCDF. Ray Fitzgerald, DSS director, asked us to submit specific proposals on funding requests, regardless of the new funds, which will be used to meet federal mandates. OEL met with a core group of stakeholders representing a variety of providers to determine where these funds could best be used to improve child services.

The CCDF working group presented two recommendations. One is Pilot Contracts for slots with Infant/Toddler Enhancement and the second is a Pilot Program to use Inclusion Specialists to provide technical assistance to centers.

Madeleine invited the Council to give feedback, and the group discussed the following:

- The opportunity with contracted slots to stabilize centers' finances so they can focus on attendance that will stabilize families
- That the contracted slot payments would be on top of Stars tiered reimbursement payments
- That ECAP and EHS—CC are examples of contract models
- Whether only high quality programs should be eligible for contracted slots, and a discussion was held about reaching populations who do not have quality care in their areas.
- Aligning these initiatives with QRIS redesign, mental health consultants

Dawn Alexander proposed adopting a statewide inclusion statement to express the commitment to special education.

The group committed to editing the proposals based on the feedback, and additional feedback on the CCDF to Tina Shockley was due by 11/20. Tina notes that no additional feedback was received by that date.

John Fisher-Klein gave a brief update on the progress of the QRIS Redesign. He said he will be reaching out to groups to discuss what updates we are considering, and that discussion is still taking place at this time. In the next phase we will dig into standards, engage a consultant, and as always continue to welcome feedback. Feedback can be emailed to John Fisher Klein at john.fisher-klein@doe.k12.de.us.

Next, the group discussed in detail the Preschool Development Grant (PDG B-5), as Dr. Krzanowski and Caitlin Gleason gave an update. They noted it was a tight deadline, but that they and a grant consultant pulled together a core grant team and community advisors to ultimately write and submit the grant on November 5 for about \$6M. Highlights from the presentation include: Estimated total funding \$242,500,000, Expected number of awards – 40, Award Ceiling: \$15,000,000 per budget period, Average Projected Award Amount is \$5,000,000 per budget period; Anticipated Start Date is 12/17/2018, it's a 12 month project period overall.

Caitlin indicated the grant addresses five core activities: Grant is about process – five activities, such as:

1. Conducting or updating a periodic needs assessment
2. Developing or updating a strategic plan
3. Maximizing parental choice and knowledge about the state's mixed delivery system
4. Sharing best practices
5. Improving overall quality of early childhood care and education activities

Kim indicated that she would forward her PowerPoint presentation to the group for further information.

Next, First Lady Tracey Quillen Carney provided some brief remarks about the First Chance Initiative. Key points from her presentation were reference to a book entitled, "Our Kids", and she noted that Delaware's kids are all of our kids, and that this is the premise behind the First Chance initiative.

She noted that many childhood issues are so intertwined, so it was hard to try to focus on one childhood issue. The goal of the initiative is to bring people together who are doing this work, and being First Lady provides her convening power to bring people together to work on this issue. The three prongs to the initiative are ending childhood hunger, early language skills (3rd grade level reading), effective recognition and response to childhood trauma

Next, Madeleine noted that the upcoming subcommittee meetings were listed on the agenda, and that minutes from the Workforce subcommittee were in the meeting packet.

Julie Johnson spoke about the Workforce subcommittee indicated they want to convene an adhoc committee for an ECE expo for high school students in order to bring students into the field and coordinate with ECE programs across the state. She anticipates the expo to occur sometime next year. She welcomed people to join the expo planning committee, as we want to build excitement around this event.

The next meeting of the Workforce subcommittee is set for December 11, 2018, 10am – 12pm, at Del Tech Terry Campus, ETB Rm 714, 100 Campus Drive, Dover, DE. The meeting will provide an opportunity to engage with University of Delaware (UD) staff about professional development. If you have questions about what is available, types of training, quality, times offered, quality assurance process, please submit them to Julie Johnson by Nov. 30, so the UD staff can respond at the Dec 11 meeting.

Lynn Kelley gave a presentation on the Consumer Education Website Overview/Public Campaign

(Mychildde.org). She noted that Children & Families First (C&FF) received the contract from DHSS, they have hired a consultant for website development and to fulfill a long list of public outreach requirements. She reference a two page document, which will be shared with the DECC members and attendees following the meeting. Lynn indicated that C&FF are now working on the technical assistance aspect of the campaign. Some changes have already been made, but they still seek formal and informal feedback. One forum for such feedback is at a scheduled meeting which everyone is invited to attend. That meeting is set for January 15, 2019, 2pm-3:30pm, at C&FF Office, 91 Wolf Creek Blvd, Suite 2 Training Room, Dover. Tina will make sure the meeting invite is sent out to everyone. In the meantime, any feedback can be sent to Lynn Kelley (lynn.kelley@cffde.org).

Next, several community updates were provided with the first being a brief presentation by the Delaware Institute for Arts in Education. They spoke about teachers learning different strategies for implementing curriculum paired with creative arts (dance, music). Staff discussed the model and how they are implemented.

Another community update was provided by Kelly Sherretz, who reminded everyone to take the IPA Out of School Survey as soon as possible (this survey link has been sent out via email). Tina will include the link to the group. Kelly says completed surveys will be accepted anytime, but encourage them to be completed as soon as possible.

Heidi Beck gave a brief presentation on the Proposed Federal Immigrant Rule/Public Charge. She indicated that in October the federal government gave notice of change to a proposed federal immigrant rule, known as Public Charge. It involves a determination made by an immigration office could impact someone's ability to enter the United States and get full legal status. These individuals are viewed as dependent on government services such as SNAP. This rule would put children and families at risk. Public comment is open until December 10, 2018. Heidi indicated that Tina would send out Head Start's position and information on this. Likewise, Molly from DHSS would send the press release from their office regarding Public Charge.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m.